

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 87.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 26, 1865.

PRICE 1½d.

LIEUTENANT VAN RENSELLAER'S BOOTS.

On a piping hot day during the month of August 1864, I was strolling down the shadiest side of Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington City. I had only been ten days in the New World, and had come over solely and entirely for pleasure; that is to say, I wanted to see something of the stern realities of that great struggle, about which we were then reading so eagerly. I was strolling along, thinking that, but for the swarms of blue-uniformed soldiers, the dust, and the negroes, Washington was not unlike Birkenhead. Everybody who is acquainted with Birkenhead knows that there are streets which commence with a semblance of life and bustle, but terminate after an existence of two hundred yards in a barren region of desolation. The same thing obtains in Washington, only on a larger and more transatlantic scale. At one end of a street, you may purchase the last new novel; at the other end, you may possibly encounter a rattlesnake.

I was gazing up one of these side-streets, when my eyes caught the words 'J. Pocock, Military Bootmaker,' inscribed in elegant characters over a shop of extremely select appearance. At the door of the shop (I purposely avoid the word store), lounged a short stout personage, dressed, as befitted the sultry weather, in a white holland coat and a Panama hat. 'Why,' said I meditatively to myself, 'does the name Pocock naturally suggest boots to my mind? I never knew a bootmaker called Pocock. Stay, though. Cunningham and Clifton of Boodle Street, St James's, had a shopman of that name; and by the awl of the venerated Saint Crispin, yonder he stands!' I crossed the street, quite pleased at having discovered Mr Pocock on foreign ground. 'Mr Pocock, do you recognise me?'

'I do not, sir,' he replied gravely.

'I am one of Cunningham's old customers: Cranbrook, son of Sir Lionel Cranbrook, of —.'

Now, in London, Mr Pocock would have whipped off his hat, and bowed down obsequiously before

the son of a baronet, but he remembered that he was on republican soil, and acted accordingly.

'Mr Cranbrook! Why, so it is. Allow me to have the pleasure of shaking your hand, sir.'

So we shook hands; and then Mr Pocock remarking that it was cooler inside than out, invited me into his inner sanctum, and placed summer drinks before me, treating me with the easy familiarity of an old friend.

'I can be of use to you here, Mr Cranbrook,' he said. 'I know something about everybody. Of course your friends up at the Embassy can get you a pass for the Union lines; but if you want' (here Mr Pocock cautiously dropped his voice) 'to spend a week or two among the "graybacks," come to me.' I suppose my countenance expressed some surprise, for the bootmaker had correctly guessed my feelings when he added: 'I'm not bragging, sir; I can do what I say. I occupy a very different social position here to what Cunningham and Clifton do in London. Cunningham and Clifton are both rich men, with their suburban villas; yet if you, Mr Cranbrook, were asked to meet them at dinner, you'd consider yourself insulted.'

'Indeed, Mr Pocock,' I began, 'I should not' —

'You couldn't help yourself, sir. Society's dead against you. Now, here, there's no aristocracy crushing you down. In England, we feel that there are people better bred and better educated than ourselves, and we succumb to them; but here we all stand much on a level: nobody worships a man simply for his money, and money is the only point of difference between one man and another. As for manners and education, Mrs Shoddy, with her fifty thousand dollars' worth of jewellery, isn't fit to be compared with a Lowell factory-girl.'

'And may I ask what brought you to America, Mr Pocock?'

'A row with my employers. Cunningham and Clifton having become rich men, forgot their position, and trod on my toes. You understand me, Mr Cranbrook—they wounded my feelings, and I quitted them.'

'You've been settled here some time?'

'Nearly four years; and I am doing a very

flourishing business. But I wish to make one remark, Mr Cranbrook. When you return to London, and tell Cunningham and Clifton that you have seen me, they will probably denounce me as a scoundrel and a thief—I'll explain why.'

The tradesman rose from his chair, and unlocking a small safe, produced a book, shaped something like the books in which merchants enter their Bills Payable and their Bills Receivable, except that the volume before me was much thicker.

'This work,' continued Mr Pocock, 'once belonged to Cunningham and Clifton; but as all the entries in it had been made by myself, and as they had treated me with the blackest ingratitude, I resolved to punish them by carrying it with me to America. This book, Mr Cranbrook, has been the foundation of my fortunes. I told you just now, sir, that America is socially and politically a republican country; but the Americans love to talk about the British aristocracy; and you may judge of the enthusiasm which this book has created, when I tell you that it contains fac-simile impressions of the feet of a large proportion of the peerage and baronetage.'

'Mine among the number, I suspect, Mr Pocock.'

'You are right, sir. Let me turn to the index. Folio 262. Yes, sir. Here you are—Lionel Cranbrook; name and address complete in your own handwriting. I always begged gentlemen to sign their names and addresses to the folio containing their foot-measurement. The consequence is, that this is a book of fashionable autographs, to say nothing of the pleasure experienced by our young Washington dandies on discovering that Lord Gules has an enlargement of the great toe joints, and that the Marquis of Wyvern owns the smallest foot in London. Yes, sir, that book has been the making of me; and nothing will induce me to part with it. I was entreated to send it for exhibition to the New York Sanitary Fair; but I declined, lest it should be lost in the transit; while Barnum has over and over again offered a fabulous price for it for his Museum.'

'I suppose you keep a similar book for the fashionable feet of America?'

'Most certainly. Here it is. Valuable, of course, in a practical point of view, as containing the measures of my best customers; but not so interesting as its English companion. You will scarcely believe how the latter has been run after. I have had half-a-dozen ladies a day in their carriages here to see it; and they always reserve their farewell look for the elegant little foot of Lord Wyvern.'

'I suppose the American book can't shew anything so small?'

'In one instance it can, sir,' replied Mr Pocock gravely. 'Allow me to turn to the index. There it is. Folio 79.'

'Lieutenant Van Rensselaer of the 238th New York. That's a Dutch name, isn't it?'

'The name is Dutch, Mr Cranbrook; but the family is very ancient and honourable. They settled near Albany, in the state of New York, two centuries ago. And now, sir, would you like to see the lieutenant's boots?'

Mr Pocock spoke with such deep solemnity that I burst out laughing.

'I shall be delighted,' I said.

'These boots,' continued the tradesman, as he

unlocked a cupboard, 'are something out of the common. Look there, sir!'

Mr Pocock lighted a taper, and approaching the cupboard with the reverential air of a devotee visiting the shrine of his patron saint, displayed to my view an elegant little pair of dress-boots, which reposed on a crimson velvet cushion, and were protected from dust and insects by a large bell-glass.

'Talk of breeding, sir!' exclaimed the boot-maker enthusiastically. 'Look at the Liliputian size of that foot—look at the arch between the heel and the ball—look at the height of instep! Lord Wyvern, sir, is all very well; but by the side of that New York gentleman, Lord Wyvern is beaten into fits.'

'Yes, they are a nice pair of boots,' said I prosaically; 'but how is it that they were never sent home?'

'Mr Cranbrook,' said the tradesman, as he took a bottle of Plantation Bitters from the mantel-piece, and poured out a couple of glasses, 'you are a countryman of mine, and an old customer of our London house. My heart warms towards you; and I'll tell you something, if you're agreeable to listen, that I've never told any one else, excepting my wife and my negro boy. There's a mystery about these boots!'

Mr Pocock's manner was so peculiar, that my curiosity was excited, and I begged him to relate the story. He began thus:

'You can see, I think, Mr Cranbrook, that I am an enthusiast in my art. I was born to be a boot-maker. I am not one of those tradesmen who cease to think of their occupation directly their shuttles are put up. My entire waking thoughts are devoted to boot-making. After years of meditation, I have devised an instrument for measuring the human foot, which will entirely supersede the present barbarously-rude expedients of rule and tape. I shall take out the patent in England. I merely mention this to shew you that I am devoted to my profession.'

'In the spring of this year, the 238th New York was encamped on Arlington Heights, close to this city. The 238th is a crack regiment; most of the officers are gentlemen of good position, and, as a matter of course, they patronised me. One day one of them said to me (he was a fellow with a great splay-foot, which my utmost skill could scarcely render passable): "Say, Pocock, I must bring one of our lieutenants down to see you. He deserves to have a civilised boot-maker." So he brought me Van Rensselaer, a carelessly-dressed young man, with a thin thoughtful face, and great eyes, that seemed to be looking into the middle of next week, or at anything sooner than what was right before them. This young gentleman had been educated at West Point (they're mostly West Pointers in the 238th), and his whole soul was given up to studying military tactics and manoeuvres. He didn't care for balls, or politics, or speechifying; and, if you will believe me, this misguided young man, with a foot which the Apollo-Belvidere might have envied, was actually wearing slop-shoes, picked up promiscuously at any chance store he passed! It nearly brought the tears into my eyes; and as I traced out the design of his matchless foot in my fac-simile book, I said: "Lieutenant, I shall be proud to make your boots for the rest of your life for nothing!"'

'I wouldn't allow any inferior workman to meddle with those boots—they were closed by my own

hands. I spent a long time over them, too, putting in an artistic touch here and there, just as a painter does with a pet picture. But when I went over to Arlington Heights, intending to present the boots in person (my negro boy Pete was respectfully carrying them behind me), I found, to my grief and chagrin, that Lieutenant Van Rensselaer had gone—gone away at less than four-and-twenty hours' notice! He had grown tired of the uneventful life of a Washington soldier, and had exchanged into the army of the Tennessee under General M'Pherson, just then about to start from Chattanooga on the great Georgian campaign. Well, Mr Cranbrook, it was a disappointment; but as I'm a philosopher, and accustomed to disappointments, I simply put the boots away on a top shelf of that show-case in the shop, and troubled my head no more about them. A month or six weeks had passed away, and the spring-mud of our streets had become converted into summer dust. It was Friday the 27th May; the hour was seven o'clock in the evening, and I was sitting in this back-parlour meditating over my new machine. My young men had all left for the day; my wife (she is an American lady) was away on a visit to her friends at Trenton, N. J.; the two Irish girls were busy ironing in the kitchen; Pete had gone to deliver a pair of ladies' walking Balmorals at the White House. I mention all these little facts to shew you that I was perfectly tranquil and composed on that evening. Well, sir, I had closed my eyes during an especially severe train of thought, and when I opened them again, I saw, through the glass door, that somebody had come into the shop. It was an officer in full uniform, and he had mounted a chair, and was endeavouring to reach something from the top of the show-case.

"Allow me, sir," I said with the utmost blandness, not in the least surprised, for you know, Mr Cranbrook, that military gentlemen do do eccentric things occasionally—"allow me, sir," I said.

"Thank you," he answered very politely; "I can reach them myself."

"I looked up, and saw it was Lieutenant Van Rensselaer! My face flushed with pleasure. 'Lieutenant,' I exclaimed, 'I'm delighted to see you. Permit me to have the honour of taking off'—"

"My good friend," he replied rather coldly, "a soldier should always perform these services for himself. I want no assistance; I merely want the boot-hooks and a little French chalk." With these words he sat down, took the boot-hooks from my hands, which were tremulous with anxious delight, kicked off his ready-made shoes, and with the most extraordinary rapidity (thereby proving the softness of the leather and the excellence of the fit) put on the new boots.

"At the sight of those model feet, encased in what I may justly call those model boots, I was nearly overpowered. My delight was so exquisite as to be almost painful; but it did not last long, for, with the simple and indeed ungracious words: 'Yes, these will do pretty well,' the lieutenant walked out of the shop."

"I know how your story is going to end, Mr Pocock," I interposed: "this fellow was a common swindler, dressed up in a uniform, who thereby got an elegant pair of boots for nothing."

Mr Pocock regarded me with quiet scorn. "What, sir!" he replied. "Do you fancy there is a swindler, or any other man in the United States,

whom these boots would fit? Not one, sir. No—no, you are altogether wide of the mark, Mr Cranbrook. Be kind enough to hear me patiently to the end.

"I took up the ready-made shoes, a pair of the sorriest products of that guilty town, Northampton (guilty, as being the cause of unnumbered bunions)

—I took up the ready-made shoes, and placed them carefully, out of regard to their late owner, on the same shelf as that from which the lieutenant had taken his dress-boots. The next morning, I could not help confiding to Pete (for Pete, though a nigger, has a far more sympathising soul than most of the white workmen) that Lieutenant Van Rensselaer had called for his boots. I expected him to answer: "Golly, mas'r, I 'se glad to hear dat;" instead of which, he rolled his eyes horribly, and nearly let a shutter fall.

"When did um call, mas'r?"

"Last evening."

"And took um away?"

"Ay, on his feet."

"Why, mas'r, dey's on de shelf now!"

"I came into the shop. Pete was perfectly right. There, on the top shelf of the show-case, stood Lieutenant Van Rensselaer's dress-boots, on the exact spot that they had occupied for days previous; while the shop-made Northampton were nowhere to be seen! What was to be done? Nothing. I was fairly scared, as people say in this country, and I told Pete to hold his tongue on pain of dismissal. When Mrs Pocock returned, I confided the affair to her ear; but though she will swallow any nonsense about spirit-mediums, she was quite incredulous, laughed at me, and said she must take away the keys of the grog-chest next time she went out of town. Now, I didn't read the newspapers much, for I consider newspaper reading sheer idleness, and that the Americans would be a happier people if three-fourths of their printing-presses were burned; but I do look now and then, having a military connection to keep up, into the *Army and Navy Journal*. Mr Cranbrook, what I saw there, in a number towards the end of June, made my blood run cold. There had been a desperate fight on the 27th May between Sherman's army and the rebels (I always call 'em "rebels"—it's safer here), at a place named Dallas, and there was a nominal return of the killed, wounded, and missing. Mr Cranbrook, said the bootmaker solemnly, 'among the missing was the name of Lieutenant Van Rensselaer.'

"I presume," said I, "that he had skedaddled quietly, and come up to Washington; which accounts for his visit to your shop."

"I should be sorry," answered Mr Pocock, "to think a man with such an elegant foot could be such a coward; but that idea won't hold for a moment. I afterwards heard something further about him. I hinted to you, Mr Cranbrook, he continued, lowering his voice, and looking cautiously around, "that I occasionally have dealings with Jeff. Davis's people. An agent, who does a brisk trade in smuggling medical stores across the border, called here lately. He had been in Georgia during the months of May and June, and recollected the name of Van Rensselaer, owing to its peculiarity. He told me that the lieutenant was mortally wounded on the 27th May, that he fell into Confederate hands, that he was removed to Atlanta, and died there a few days afterwards."

"Well," said I, "it's a very strange story, and I

can only account for it on the supposition that your imagination, in all that relates to boots, is so powerful as to—Hollo! Pocock, here's a carriage drawn up at your door.

The active tradesman instantly rushed out like a spider from his den, while I strolled idly into the front shop. The carriage was an open barouche, and contained two persons. The one seated nearest to the side-walk was a lady, who might be some fifty years of age, with one of those peculiarly American faces in which the soft beauty of a European ancestry seems to be blended with the stern dignity of the aboriginal race. She gazed sadly and yet proudly at the young man who reclined by her side. He was evidently an invalid, or at least a person recovering from severe illness, for his face was thin and wan, and notwithstanding the sultriness of the weather, he was wrapped in a buffalo-robe.

'My son wishes to speak to you, if you are Mr Pocock,' said the lady in a soft voice, addressing that obsequious tradesman, who stood bareheaded, with his hand gracefully resting on the door of the carriage, as he had been wont to do in Boodle Street, St James's.

'Mr Pocock,' said the young man, smiling pleasantly, though speaking with feebleness, 'you were kind enough to make a pair of boots for me last spring.'

'Lieutenant Van Rensselaer!' exclaimed the tradesman, turning pale.

'The same.'

'Pardon me, Lieutenant, I must ask one question,' cried Mr Pocock excitedly. 'Did you call at my shop on the 27th May, at seven in the evening?'

'Most certainly not,' replied the soldier, 'for I was in the midst of the battle of Dallas. Just at seven in the evening, a cannon-shot took off both my legs, and curiously enough my first thought was this: "How disappointed poor Pocock will be when he finds I can't wear his exquisite boots!"'

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN ENGLAND.

THE difference between the Jews of one country and the Jews of another is almost as great as that between one nation and another. The Polish Jew differs almost as widely from the Jew of Portugal and Spain, as the Polish nobility does from our own; and the contrast between the timid bearing of the Jew who dwells in Rome, with the independent bearing of the Jew born and bred in this country, is about as striking as it well can be. A large proportion of the Jews who inhabit the British metropolis are immigrants from other countries, principally from Germany, and this large admixture tends to keep up the distinction between Jews and Englishmen, which but for that circumstance would be hardly perceptible. The community is divided into two classes—the Sephardim and the Ashkenasim; the former claim to be descended from the tribe of Judah, whereas the latter make no claim to be descended from any particular tribe. The Jewish statesmen, who have in all ages as well as in the present day distinguished themselves by their superior ability, as well as most of those who have been eminent for their intellectual

attainments, and the high position they have reached in the profession of music and the arts, have been members of the first-named class. At the present time, this distinction, like the distinctions among ourselves, is far less marked than formerly, the intermarrying of the two classes having in a great measure obliterated them. Beside this difference of descent, there is a religious distinction between them, but this is hardly so great as that between Catholics and Protestants.

Of course there are among the Jews, as among other people, many who do not practise the Law, and are as ignorant of its ceremonies as those who do not belong to the community. Those, however, who regard these matters seriously, and many who do not, are zealous to practise its ceremonies. The first ceremony to which the Jew is subjected is that enjoined by Moses as a distinctive characteristic, and may be regarded as equivalent to our baptism, only, neither the godfather nor the godmother assume a responsibility as regards the religious education of the child, which they cannot perform, and would not if they could. A sort of sacred name having been chosen—not to be used in everyday life, for which purpose another is provided—the Sandakin bring him to the synagogue, into which the godfather enters, but not the godmother, females not being admitted to the body of the synagogue. At the door, therefore, the godmother relinquishes him to the godfather, who carries him to the Mohel, by whom the rite is performed. The ceremony is attended with the utterance of sundry religious phrases, and at its termination charitable offerings are made, and the parties return home to celebrate the auspicious event in the manner most agreeable to them. After the lapse of thirty days—if it is the first-born of the mother—it has to be redeemed. This is done by inviting an official termed a Cohen to a kind of feast, at which the relatives of the family are present. To him the father hands his son, and says: 'My wife hath brought forth a first-born son; take him; I give him to thee.' The cohen takes the infant, and asks the father if he will redeem the child, to which he of course replies that he will; and having placed a sum of money, which varies according to circumstances, in the hands of the cohen, he receives back his son, and the ceremony is completed by the pronouncement of a formula of blessings.

Until the boy is thirteen years of age, his father is held responsible for his misdeeds; but when that period arrives, he attends at the synagogue, and takes the responsibility on himself in presence of the congregation. This is a very important period in the life of the young Jew; he is now supposed to have reached manhood, which, of course, in the case of the native-born Jews is only supposition, though in Palestine it may be a literal fact. It is at this epoch that he, in addition to the garment fashioned in a manner somewhat resembling a poncho, but with fringes at the corners to which a meaning is attached too long to be repeated here, assumes the Tephilin, of

which there are two, one for the head, the other for the arm. They are made in the following manner: on four strips of parchment are inscribed—in Hebrew characters—certain texts of Scripture, which are placed in a parchment box attached to long strips of leather. Before saying his prayers, he fastens one to his left arm between the elbow and the shoulder by winding the strap seven times round it; and the other he lays on his forehead, and fixes it there by winding the strap round his head. There is a set form of prayer to be repeated when he has done this, but which does not preclude him from making any other if he is so disposed.

The next important event in the Jew's life is his betrothment. If he is of a respectable family, the friends and relatives meet together; a species of contract, termed the Deed of Penalty, is read, which recites the penalty incurred by either party in the event of a change of mind. When this is over, a cup is broken, and they all sit down to a feast. The marriage is a much more solemn ceremony; and when the parties are in a position to dress well, is a very interesting sight. The bridegroom and the bride are each led by two friends beneath a canopy supported by a pole at each corner; here they are placed face to face, with the rabbi in the same position towards them as in the Protestant church. An attendant then brings a glass of wine to the rabbi, who, holding it in his hand, delivers a short prayer, ending with the words: 'Blessed art thou, O Lord, the sanctifier of thy people Israel by the means of the canopy and wedlock.' The rabbi then hands the wine to the bridegroom and bride, who each takes a sip; after which the bridegroom places the ring on the finger of the bride, repeating as he does so in Hebrew: 'Behold thou art betrothed unto me with this ring according to the rites of Moses and Israel.' After the rabbi has blessed the union, the bride and bridegroom sip from another glass of wine; an empty wine-glass is laid on the floor, which the bridegroom crushes with his foot; those present wish him good-fortune; and the ceremony is over.

Those who remember what is said in the Pentateuch concerning divorce, will be apt to think that cases of the kind must be very frequent among the Jewish community, but this is not the case among British Jews. Among them, mere incompatibility of temper or fickleness on the part of the husband would not be sufficient to justify him in giving her a bill of divorce, and sending her away.

Before proceeding to another branch of the subject, I may as well describe that which is the end to which all must come, Jew and Gentile alike. In what I am about to say, it will be understood that I am describing the death-bed of a devout man. After he is told that his labour is finished, water is brought to him, in which he washes his hands, and his children assemble round his bed to receive his final blessing. He lays his hand on the head of each, and says: 'The Lord bless and keep thee. May the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious to thee; may He lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. May the spirit of the Lord rest upon thee; the spirit of wisdom and understanding—the spirit of counsel and might—the spirit of knowledge and

the fear of the Lord.' He adds whatever exhortations he may think fit, and from this time he employs his thoughts on the great change that is approaching. When it is perceived that the soul is struggling to shuffle off its mortal coil, those present in the room are careful not to stand near his head or his feet, for it is believed, and a grand belief it is, that the spirit of the Almighty rests on the head, and the Angel of Death stands at the feet. After it is evident to those present that the spirit has departed, they remain silent and motionless for some minutes, and, when this time has expired, each utters the ejaculation: 'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, the righteous Judge.'

The ceremonies which follow are peculiar, but would occupy too much space to describe. I will merely add that the corpse is laid in its final resting-place in a different position to that in which Christians are laid; instead of being laid east and west, as they are, it is laid north and south; and there is no mingling of their dust in the earth, for though the body of the husband may rest next to that of his wife, or his son, or his daughter, each is placed in its separate grave. The rabbi and those present, as the corpse is lowered into the grave, address it thus: 'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who hast formed you in judgment, fed and cherished you in judgment, killed you in judgment, and knoweth the number of you all in judgment, and in a future time will cause you all to live again in judgment. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the restorer of life to the dead;' and concluding: 'Let it come in peace to its appointed place.'

The prescribed mourning for the dead lasts for seven days, and a mitigated form thereof for thirty days. The rules are, that during the first period there shall be no recreation of any kind, but the mourner must remain seated on the floor with bare feet, neither washing nor changing his raiment. All visitors are welcome, but no ceremony is observed, and as each takes his departure, he utters the ejaculation: 'May the Omnipresent comfort you with all the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.' The same prayer is expressed by the rabbi if the mourner visits the synagogue during this period, which no earnest man fails to do, seeing that he is received by the whole congregation with marks of sympathy as he takes his place on the mourners' bench. The second period of mourning, as I have said, is less strict, but it does not entirely end for twelve months. The strictness with which the prescribed ceremonies are observed will depend on the character of the individual; but if the deceased happened to be a father or mother, the son visits the synagogue frequently to repeat a form of prayer on behalf of the soul of the departed, the belief in the immortality of which is expressly mentioned. The anniversary of the death-day is observed throughout life.

The position of the Jewess differs from that of the Jew in more respects than that of the Christian woman does from the Christian. She cannot repeat the prayers just alluded to, which are known as Kaddish, nor is she allowed to participate in some other observances. On the other hand, there are duties which fall to her peculiar lot. The household duties are hers; on her rests the responsibility of seeing that the food is cooked in accordance with the prescribed forms; on her, too, reposes the semi-sacred duties of lighting the

lamp for the Sabbath, a ceremony which, if rightly performed, is accompanied by a movement, repeated three times, round the light, and the utterance of the words: 'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who hast sanctified us with thy commandments, and commanded us to light the lamp of the Sabbath.' Also of preparing the dough for the Sabbath. In towns, however, where it is inconvenient, and often would not be possible to comply with this latter ceremony, the bread is prepared by bakers according to certain rules; the same also is the case with meat; but of this I shall speak presently. Everybody remembers the supposititious case put by the Sadducees to Jesus Christ with respect to a woman who became the widow of seven brethren. Unlikely as such a case is to happen in reality, it not unfrequently happens that a woman is left a widow who has the right to call on her husband's brother to marry her, if he be not already married, or if he declines to do this, to set her free to marry another. This setting her free is rather a troublesome affair. Formal notice is given in the synagogue that a Chalitzah is to take place on a specified day; and on this day the persons concerned assemble, the brother repeats his refusal publicly, and the following ceremony is performed: a kind of list-shoe, with long strings, is brought forward from the place in which it is kept, which is bound on the right foot of the offender. The rabbi then leads the woman towards him, and she repeats her charge against him, and he his refusal. The woman then stoops down, and with her right hand unfastens the knots in the strings which bind the shoe to the leg, and when she has accomplished this, she takes off the shoe, and throwing it down before the delinquent, repeats the words: 'So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house; and his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed.' The witnesses repeat three times: 'His shoe is loosed,' and the ceremony is finished, and thenceforward the woman is free to marry again. Of course a widow who does not marry again need not perform this ceremony.

I have already mentioned that bread is to be prepared in a certain specified manner; equally stringent rules are observed in the preparation of other articles of food, especially meat. The slaughterman or Shochet is a Jew, and before he is competent to exercise his profession, he must pass an examination, in which only a man who has considerable acquaintance with rabbinical jurisprudence is likely to obtain a diploma. He must also possess somewhat more than the average anatomical knowledge; but the grand requisites are extreme care and conscientiousness—the latter for physical as well as moral reasons—for on his verdict, pronounced after an inspection of the internal organs, it depends whether the beast shall be accepted or rejected. His duties are supplemented by the Shomer, his colleague, who watches his operations to see that they are performed according to the regulations, and who afterwards seals each separate joint. Upon him also devolves the duty of extracting certain sinews from the hind-legs.

The government of the Jewish community, religious and social, is vested in the Beth Din, a tribunal composed of the rabbi and three eminent Jews. Except in weighty criminal cases, few matters, in which Jews alone are concerned, travel into the Christian courts. In religious matters, the

community is allowed less freedom than among Christians, at least in England: they cannot assemble for prayer in other places than the synagogue without special permission; but inasmuch as the synagogue is open for service every evening, there does not appear any great cause of complaint on this score. Jews, however, are not more scrupulous than Christians in the performance of their religious duties; if they were, such is the number and minuteness of their regulations, as to what it is lawful and unlawful to do on the Sabbath-day, that few memories could retain them, consequently, the generality of the Jews disregard, or only conform to the more important of them. Indeed, the observance of the Sabbath is very much a matter of conscience, great liberty being allowed, or, at all events, taken by each individual. The feast of the New Year is observed with greater strictness, or it would be more correct to say, more generally. There is one ceremony, at this season in particular, which is held in great esteem; this is the Shophar, or day of blowing the trumpet. There are a great number of reasons given for observing this festival; the principal of which are: To remind the hearers of the creation; as a call to repentance; the presentation of the Law to Moses; the destruction of the Temple; the gathering of the nation; the day of judgment; and the resurrection of the dead. The whole ceremony occupies a long time in the performance.

The day of Atonement is another important day. They believe that on this day the fate of individuals is determined for the year, but each may avert the evil that is imposed on him by prayer and supplication previous to sunset on that day. On that day, too, the Jew sacrifices a cock, and the Jewess a hen, as an atonement. A pretty and affecting ceremony takes place about this time; the children of each household go to their parents and ask forgiveness for their offences, which is, of course, accorded them. The day of Atonement is spent in fasting and prayer, and whatever may be the laxity of the people in the observance of the Sabbath, they observe this day with remarkable strictness, as they do also the Feast of Tabernacles, where it is possible; but inasmuch as in towns it is not often that a family can erect a shed in the open air, where they can see through the boughs with which it is covered the stars of heaven, and receive upon their bodies the dews which fall at night, this portion of the ceremony is usually omitted; though there are men among them who are capable of braving cold or wet for five nights in succession, in order to fulfil the rules in all their strictness.

The ceremonies in the synagogues are well attended; and it is a curious spectacle to see the Reader, as he pronounces a Laud, waving branches of palm, myrtle, and willow towards each point of the compass, his example being followed by certain members of the congregation, who follow him in procession, and repeat the *Hosannah*. The feast lasts seven days altogether, and on the last day the whole of the members of the congregation provide themselves with a branch of willow with five offshoots, with seven leaves on each. A similar procession to that already described takes place, accompanied by a long series of ejaculations concerning the Messiah, at the conclusion of which those present strike their branches against their seats, and it is considered by some a good or bad omen according as the leaves come off with more or less facility. Some of them go to a bath in connection with

the synagogue, which is quite dark, and into this they descend and immerse themselves three times. There is a sort of superstitious belief attached to this, to the effect that the man whose life will be required of him before the next day of Atonement will see his 'fetch' without a head. The great day of the year, however, is the Passover. The strictest care is taken to provide bread, or rather a kind of cakes, for the celebration of this event, and also the wine which is used on the occasion. This is arranged on the table after a specified manner, along with a dish containing the shank-bone of a leg of lamb roasted, an egg baked in hot ashes, and bitter herbs. A cup of salt water is placed on the table to remind those present of the passage through the Red Sea, and another containing a mixture which is intended to remind them of the peculiar manner in which the bulk of the nation were employed in Egypt. This is a family celebration, and the master of the house performs the ceremonies incidental to it, and repeats the prescribed formulae, the nature of which may easily be imagined, but are too long to be detailed; the whole being concluded with the singing of the Paschal hymn. With the mention that a solemn fast is kept in commemoration of the destruction of the Temples, we must conclude our notice of this branch of the subject.

I have already said that the Jewish community is divided into the Sephardim and the Ashkenasim, the former being few in number in comparison with the latter. The religious distinction between these is not very wide; not nearly so much so as between either of them and the British Reformed Jews. Not that either differs from the other in the fundamental articles of their faith; the belief of the latter in the unity of the Supreme Being, the resurrection of the dead, and the advent of the Messiah, being as strong as among the former, the chief difference being similar to that which Lord Ebury desires to introduce into the Established Church; but in addition to the reduction of the service to two hours and a half, a great portion of it is performed in English instead of in the Hebrew tongue, of which the congregation know as little as a Roman Catholic congregation in this country knows of Latin.

The subject of education is one to which all the importance is attached that the subject merits. The sons of the well-to-do Jewish tradesmen of London for the most part go to the large city schools; those of the poorer classes to free schools, supported by the Jews themselves, for the development and improvement of which the Jews are greatly indebted to their present chief rabbi, who has for many years taken a great interest in the subject. The education imparted in these schools is similar to that taught in British schools. They are also taught to consider themselves as part of the British nation; and while they are instructed in the doctrines of their religion, and to hold fast to the Law as imparted by Moses, the fullest toleration is conceded to other sects; the most eminent men among them admitting that there are other roads to heaven beside that along which they themselves travel. Their charities are numerous and extensive, and though a large number of Jews are constantly coming to this country who are miserably poor, it is seldom that a Jew is found in such a destitute condition as is only too common among the Christian population surrounding them.

We frequently see the names of Jews among the

lists of contributors to Christian charities. They contributed a considerable sum to the relief of the Lancashire cotton-spinners, and I remember to have read of one who gave the handsome donation of one thousand pounds to the Sons of the Clergy corporation; but their gifts to Christian charities are trifling in comparison with those they bestow on those founded for the relief of members of their own faith, and this is only acting in accordance with their Law. A remarkable instance of a Jew devoting himself to the work of charity is mentioned in a letter from Wilna, written a few days ago, which is so interesting that I translate an extract from it. 'A few days since, nearly the whole population of Wilna followed a corpse to its last abode. It was that of a Jewish beggar named Symel Shizgol, who for thirty years had traversed the streets of this city. His cry was known in every nook and corner of it: "Remember the poor, the widow, and the orphan!" During this period he collected upwards of ninety thousand roubles, every kopeck of which he expended in relieving the sick, in paying for the instruction of poor children, and in supplying food to the needy. His evenings were spent in manufacturing the snuff which he sold for his own support: the surplus of his earnings he also gave to the poor.' The letter concludes with the touching words: 'He was alone in the world.'

The social condition of the Jews in this country is precisely the same as that of their fellow-citizens; they have the same privileges, and labour under no disabilities. In this respect, England is an example to every other nation. Even in Switzerland, so liberal in other matters, it is at the present moment a question of granting them liberties, which were conceded to them in this country many years ago. But there is just now a marked difference in their treatment in European countries, to which we may refer in passing, though it is not strictly included in the title at the head of this article. The greatest advance, perhaps, has been in Russia. Not very long ago, they laboured under restrictions of various kinds; now, they may own land and houses, trade freely, and their children are admissible to the public schools as freely as those born of Russian parents. The liberty accorded to them in Russia extends, or will extend, to those of Poland, a country in which they abound, a circumstance which is accounted for by the fact that, during the terrible persecutions to which they were subjected during the middle ages in other continental countries, Sigismund the king gave them an asylum there. In that country, they have nearly the whole of the commerce in their hands. In other European countries, they still labour under disabilities of more or less importance; but their condition is worst, perhaps, at Rome. Here they are not merely subject to the ill-treatment of the mob, which hates them, but to the contumely of the government, which despises and hates them also. Until we heard it confirmed by a high authority, we doubted the truth of the statement made by About, that in return for the yearly contribution they are required to pay, the official to whom they pay it makes a motion with his foot, which implies that the deputation are to consider themselves kicked. In this city of nations, they are practically confined to one particular spot, and an exceedingly filthy spot it is; so much so, that it is really wonderful how the children contrive to grow into men and women in it. Strictly speaking, the

law which confined them to this wretched quarter has been abrogated; but, in fact, they are confined to it still, for no man will let them have a house in any other part if he knows it. Still they are allowed to live in Rome, which is more than can be said of another well-known town in Italy—namely, Velletri. In an edict just issued by the Vicar-general, the law is recognised as regular which permits Jews to sojourn in that town for ten days for the purpose of carrying on lawful and honest commerce, and ordaining that they must be within their domicile before ten o'clock at night, and must not issue from it until after sunrise, nor approach monasteries or other pious institutions subject to episcopal jurisdiction, nor use any hospitality or familiarity in their transactions and conversations with Christians. By contravening any of the above regulations, they incur the punishment of imprisonment and a fine of five crowns, which is to be applied to the benefit of the religious establishments.

In England, Jews are exempt from forced military service, which is not the case abroad, for whatever may be the prejudice existing among the lower classes of continental nations against them, the governments claim a proportion of their blood, and a goodly number may be found serving either as officers or privates in the German armies. Russia, in granting them privileges, has also ordained that with them they shall be liable to the same duties in this respect as their fellow-subjects—a liability which is extremely distasteful to some of them, if we may rely on a statement made by the *Fremdenblatt*, which says that a great number of the Jewish youth of Samogitia have fled to the mountains to avoid the conscription ordered by General Kauffmann. In this dislike of the conscription, however, they do not differ from Italians or Frenchmen.

At least ten Jews are requisite to form a congregation, and this is one reason why they locate themselves in particular quarters in towns, though the instinct of migration is still strong within them. They must, however, be increasing in numbers and wealth, for quite recently a new synagogue was opened at Southampton, and they are about to establish one on a grand scale at Paris, which is to be built on a plan combining several styles, and the cost of which is estimated at nearly £40,000, exclusive of the sum required for internal decorations. There is no distinction among the seats of the worshippers, but, as in recently-constructed Christian churches, all are on the same level, only the women, as they are not considered to form any part of the congregation, instead of being merely put on one side, as in certain Puseyite churches, are relegated to the gallery, from whence they may witness, but not share, in the ceremonies. The ark and other objects contained in the synagogue, along with the peculiar forms and ceremonies accompanying the performance of religious worship, makes a visit to a synagogue very interesting, only the visitor must be careful to keep his hat on.

The character of the Jews remains pretty much what it was in the days of Moses, and the writer of the letter published in the *Times* denying the statement that Baron Rothschild had attempted to use undue influence with the Jewish electors in the City, was fully justified in saying that of all people they were the least open to coercion in the matter of voting, or in any other matter. Supposing

the whole of those resident in the City recorded their votes in his favour, it would go far to secure his election, since it is calculated that there are not less than 30,000 of the people within its boundaries.

THE CLYFFARDS OF CLYFFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'LOST SIR MARSHBROOK,' &c.

CHAPTER XVII.—THE CLOUD IN THE SUNSHINE.

Two years have passed since the events recorded in the last chapter. Our scene is no longer laid at Clyffe Hall, but far away in the south country; while the dwelling which is occupied by our *dramatis personæ* is very unpretending. A little low-roofed cottage, set in a garden glowing with spring flowers, such as only flourish so early in a genial climate. The two French windows open on a tiny lawn, smooth as a boy's cheek, and in the centre rises a tall clump of Pampas grass, watered by a shapely nymph of marble from a marble pitcher; the lawn is girt by a broad purple belt of fuchsia, beyond which lies the garden, not for show alone, but rich in vegetables and savoury herbs; while around all this fairy demesne there runs a waving wall of odorous tamarisk. A waving wall, I say, for though the cottage is nestled in the hollow of a chalk-hill, and the boisterous winds from north and east, which roar and revel on the Downs above, can never reach it, it lies open to the south and west winds, whose soothing song scarce ceases the summer through. With them the swallow comes to nestle neath the eaves, with them the bee (whom on the tiny heights their violence will not permit to ply his thievish trade) to rob the flowers; but on a ledge of chalk, full in the noon-day sun, stand three stout hives, for which the rent is paid in glittering comb, so that the winged thief is rifled in his turn—a few frail trees, warped by the windy years to grow askant, keep off the western sun; but all the south is open. To those who sit within, the cottage, the sloping garden, and the sloping down beyond, are seen, and then the sea; but to one who from the window withdraws a pace or two, or lies upon his bed up stairs, the eye looks straight down on the boundless blue of ocean. Ah, precious boon in sickness, to watch the shifting shadows of the clouds, the swirling eddies, the daily battles of the wind and tide; to mark the sea-gulls wheel or blown about by the fierce gusts; to see the glorious company of white-robed ships, which this or that fair wind has just set free, pass by upon their distant errands, or to gaze upon the more homely toil which, in the little bay, the fishermen are plying; to contemplate the great waters, and those who make their business thereon. Then at night, how the sharp pain is dulled by the sea's monotonous undertone, that lullaby of everlasting rest, or overwhelmed and deadened by the majestic music of the storm!

But there is no sickness in this cottage now; the tall man sitting in the little balcony above the doorway, whose uncovered head almost touches the green roofing, is not bowed by it; nor is the graceful form of his young wife, although a year ago or so she blessed the sea, what time, after her blissful trouble, she lay awake long nights with her sweet babe beside her, sleepless, but in rest unspeakable. The baby-girl, too, clinging to her mother's skirt, is well and blooming. And yet there is a shadow upon the young wife's brow, which even the

sunshine of that tiny presence cannot erase, nor the blithe and ringing tones of her husband's voice.

'What, my pretty one!' quoth he, 'a cloud upon thy brow upon our marriage morning. For shame! Come, let me kiss it away, love. Not a word of quarrel have we had yet, though we be such old married folks; but I shall quarrel, and spoil our claim to the Dunmow flitch, if you do not smile to-day. No, not an April gleam like that, which leaves your heaven the darker, but a July brightness, that must last all day. Come, smile like my own Mildred.'

'My dear, dear husband,' answered Mildred tenderly, 'I know I am very foolish, very wrong. There cannot be, of course—there cannot be any real danger to us.' She stooped down to her child, and drew her to her bosom, and held her there, and kissed and rocked her to and fro. 'It is so long ago, and she has never tracked us yet; and we have taken no one into our confidence, so that neither by design nor carelessness can we ever be betrayed; and living here so far away from her, and under another name, we cannot but be safe—I have said to myself all this a thousand times; and yet, and yet?'

'Yet what, Mildred?'

'Well, nothing; you would only laugh at me. But to-day, of all the days in the year—the day when I would wish to feel no touch of gloom—a something—some presentiment of evil seems to cast its threatening shadow upon my soul. She will never cease to seek us out, Raymond, while life is in her; of that I am right sure. A wolf or blood-hound could not be more stanch, more persistent for ill. When I think of her, I always think of that fell creature, tardy but sure as Fate, which pursues the helpless hare whole days and nights, and at the last—no matter when that is—'

'My dear wife,' interrupted Raymond impatiently, 'you are not complimentary to your Aunt Grace at all! The animal you describe is a creature of evil odour called a stoat; moreover, you do not take a high view of my own courage and ability to defend you and little Milly in calling me a helpless hare. If I be so, and this vermin comes within kicking distance, I know this, she will find me uncommonly strong in the hind-legs.'

'Nay, dearest, while you are with us, I rarely have any fear; but when you leave the cottage even for an hour, and now you are going away to-morrow for two whole nights—ah me, that will be terrible!'

'Why, what a coward has my Mildred become, who used to be so brave.'

'That was when I had only myself to take care of; but this little one, Raymond—what would my aunt not give to get her into her power. The baby-hiress of Clyffe! I would that we were what we seem to be here, and she but Milly Hepburn, with nothing to inherit save this little house and ground. We have been happier here than ever we were elsewhere.'

'That is very true, love; and I for my part should be well content to pass all my days here. But if poor Rupert dies—or worse, I will not sit down and let that woman usurp my rights, far less my child's. No, that I will not. I know, love, why you shudder. You deem that she would poison me and mine, rather than give up an inch of land, or yield one golden piece. But this poisoning is not so easy as one reads of in the story-books. At Clyffe, indeed, she might have worked her

wicked will without much hindrance, or perhaps even subsequent peril; but not so here. Moreover, she is not above the law. Her unscrupulous fingers cannot clutch what that bids her to deliver up, any more than they can reach us here to harm thyself, thy child, nor me. I tell you we are safe, Mildred; and if there is a fear on either side, it should be upon Grace Clyffard's. Is she to storm and rave for ever, and we to listen shuddering, because we two have chosen to marry?—Have I no cause to curse her in my turn; an alien from my home, and forced to keep in hiding like one escaped from prison? I think that I am doing ill in this, wife. If there were no cowards, be sure there would be no tyrants in the world. The sum my poor father gave me is nigh spent; I need the gold he told me with his own lips was left to me in his will. Why should I not claim my own?'

'Raymond, Raymond,' cried the young wife passionately, 'for Heaven's sake, be patient. Let us not bring the thunderbolt upon ourselves, even if we are fated not to escape it. Gold is indeed precious in Grace Clyffard's greedy eyes, and power, and the pride of station; but revenge is dearer to her than all. Be sure that on that day when we fled from Clyffe together, upon his very marriage morn, she registered a vow to pay us both.'

'I should have thought my lady would have had enough of vows,' returned Raymond grimly, 'when you kept that oath she so wickedly extorted, to the letter—married her stepson within thirty days! Sweet perjurer! I can forgive poor Rupert's wrath at having missed his prize so narrowly—since he was but her tool, and never knew how cruelly she urged you—but as for her— Well, let her grind her dainty teeth. To think that, after two long years of absence, the memory of this kite should still flutter my dove, though folded in my very arms! Your cheek is chill, Mildred; are you cold?'

'Yes, a little cold, dear husband. The wind is rising in the west, as though for tempest. We shall have rough weather to-night.'

'Tis like enough; and if bad weather sets in after this long calm, it will last, I fear. Come, let us have a walk together, while walk we may. Upon one's wedding-day, a ramble arm-in-arm, Darby and Joan-like, is only fitting. Let us pay a visit to the good lieutenant and his wife.'

'Ay, and take the dear child with us, to see her god-parents,' exclaimed Mildred joyfully.

'You—deceitful—wicked—gipsy,' returned her husband, shaking his finger in reproof; 'to see her god-parents indeed! You want to have her with us—that is all. I do believe you never feel your little treasure safe unless beneath our eyes. However, just as you like, love; tell Jane, then, to put her bonnet on.'

'I had rather carry Milly myself, Ray—Jane is rather busy—and it's such a very little way to the coast-guard station.'

'Another white one! It is three miles, if it is a yard. But then the walk is upon the cliff-top, is it not? a very dangerous pathway in a wind; and Jane is such a giddy girl, and can never be brought to understand that she carries so much more than her life's worth in her arms, when she has that precious child.'

'Nay, Raymond, dear, I know you love it just as much as I do. How thankful you seemed to be when you were told your child was—'

'Ay, true,' interrupted Raymond hastily; 'but

that was very foolish of me. If he had chanced to be a boy, what then? He would have had a very different bringing-up to that which has ruined so many a Clyffard. He would have been spared the curse which has fallen upon the eldest-born of us for so many generations.'

'And yet how glad you were that it was a girl, Raymond.'

'Was I? Well, perhaps I was; at all events, I love our Milly. Come, button-mouth; give papa a kiss; then get you gone, you and your mother too, and wrap yourselves up warm, lest the rain should catch us before we can get home again.'

With smiles and kisses, he dismissed them both; then left alone in the verandah, he leaned upon the wooden rail that faced the lawn, and drew a letter from his pocket; the address ran thus: Mr J. HEPBURN, Pampas Cottage, by Westportown. It was written in a cramped and vulgar hand, and in one corner was scrawled '*Immediate*,' underlined three times. 'How fortunate it was,' soliloquised Raymond, 'that I chanced to meet the post-man in my walk this morning. Otherwise, this letter would have driven my wife wild with terror. She would neither have eaten nor slept till she had compelled me to flee once more from the wrath of this she-devil to some obscure hiding-place, just as we have got reconciled to our little cottage here, and have begun to feel it "home." I will burrow no more, but fight it out above ground. The threatened peril is mysterious enough, but the warning puzzles me even more. What a hand my anonymous friend writes; all leaning the wrong way, like those blown-backward saplings yonder. It may be disguised, of course, but at the best I should say it was no gentleman's. I am not much of a critic, but the spelling too, let alone the composition, appears rather faulty.'

'Bevoir, Raymond Clyffard. The cat's eyes have found you out at last; find another hoal for a little; and at once. There is danger lurking at your very door.—A TRUE WELL-WISHER.'

It is certainly very strange, and stranger that it comes when my poor wife has this nameless dread upon her. It can be no hoax, for nobody save those we have most cause to fear could have supplied the materials for it. The post-mark is Westportown only; therefore, the writer cannot be very far off. But except the simple folks whom we are about to visit, what Wellwisher have I about here, or indeed anywhere, alas! We are compelled to impose even upon these good people; to lead a life of deception, to exist humbly, furtively! What a fool was I to pass my word to Mildred that it should always be so until Rupert!—He thrust the letter in his bosom as his young wife rejoined him, equipped for walking, and with the child in her arms.

'Well, you have been quick,' said he. 'What, Milly want a toss before she starts? Give her to me then, mamma. Nay, now I've got her, I shall carry her myself; all strategies are fair in love, as in war: she is my lawful prize.'

It was a fair picture—that stalwart father with the wee bairn cradled in one sheltering arm, and the other thrown around his wife protectingly; and yet there was something in his eyes beside their love: the fire that glows within the eagle's orbs what time she sees the fowler, inch by inch descending from the crag upon her eyrie, axe in hand, to bear away her young.

CHAPTER XVIII.—THE PREVENTIVE STATION.

The path which led from Pampas Cottage to the coast-guard station lay westward along the shore, and for a little distance after passing by the fishing-hamlet, as Raymond had said, close to the cliff-top, but soon descended, not to the beach, but through an intermediate belt of rock and underwood between the cliff and the sea. Here, sheltered from the rising wind, and amid a verdant wilderness of thorn and hazel, it was easy to have imagined it was midsummer. The jackdaws slid in circles from the cliff; the wood-lark hanging in the sheltered air poured forth his love; the linnet whistled to his mate from the warm bush; and flitting from shrub to shrub, the tiny wren twittered his mite of thanks in God's own ear. At times, too, from a broad bank of brier, that, like a frieze, stood out from the white cliff, a hawk would shoot forth, noiseless and swift as light, and poise above the peaceful scene like Satan watching our blameless Parents in their sleep; then shooting up above the down, would glide and poise again, despite the wind, and yet again would rise for broader view, to fall—a malignant star—and strike his innocent prey in some seeming sheltered homestead.

No homestead is, however, visible to human eye—no sign of the presence of man. The broken rocks, indeed, resemble often human architecture—here a fluted shaft, and there a column with its capital acanthus-wreathed—but some great throes of Nature has so strewed them there, who in her pangs can fashion things more beautiful than Art can mould in years of patient toil. The sea is sailless, save for one speck of white, which, like a pure soul passing to eternity, goes suddenly out on the horizon's verge.

'Is not this a very paradise, my Mildred?' exclaimed Raymond enthusiastically.

'It is indeed, dear Ray. May Heaven's angels guard us while we tarry in it.'

'Amen,' answered Raymond gravely. 'Not, however,' added he more cheerfully, 'that I am aware of our needing any special guardian, other than what all mortals need against their spiritual foe. As for mortal enemies, never, surely, was a little household so girt about with defenders as is ours. The smugglers in the village would fight for you as resolutely as ever they fought for an anker of rum; while the good lieutenant and his twenty men here would draw their cutlasses in your defence as gallantly as though you were the Inland Revenue herself. What a snug home they have yonder! Of all the comfortable-looking, ship-shape, spick-and-span residences that men can dwell in, I do think a Preventive Station is the most enviable.'

The path had gradually risen until it brought them in sight of the tenement in question, a long low line of building, with a verandah in front of it, and a large garden, which extended to the sandy shore. They stood now at the look-out station, marked by a mast for signal-flags, and sheltered by a turf-bank from the wind, with the grass worn almost bare upon it in places where the man on duty was wont to lay his telescope—altogether a snug vantage-ground enough, and of course commanding a great expanse of view. The picturesque broken ground over which the three had come, upon one side; and on the other, a white curved bay, with the coast-guard boat high on the shining sand, but ready to be launched at a minute's notice;

while in front the sea could be swept for scores of miles. But by far the most noticeable feature of 'the Look-out' were certain carved wooden images stuck up on end, which gave to it the appearance of a spot dedicated to heathen rites. These idols, though representing the softer sex as often as the masculine, were by no means remarkable for personal beauty. Not one had been permitted to retain its entire complement of limbs, and if a lady had managed to preserve the aquiline of her nose, she might consider herself a fortunate exception. These were figure-heads of vessels which the cruel waves had mutilated, when they cast the ships to which they belonged upon that long low reef to westward, stretching far out to sea. Already, with the growing wind, the waters churned and foamed there in white malice; but in that comparative calm it was impossible to picture what wild work they made there during a storm. What hours of human agony had been witnessed by those pitiless cliffs, when, scudding before the gale, the helpless ships came on to their doom among the hissing breakers! What vain resolutions of repentance had they beheld in the white scared faces to whom Death was beckoning—what dumb resolve to meet the worst like men!

From Deadman's Reef, no living man or woman ever yet came to land; nay, the bodies of the Drowned which strewed the coast for days after a wreck could scarcely be called human, so bruised and mangled were they by the sharp and jagged rocks; but at very low tide, the Reef was not without its attractions. Gold had been found there, and was found there still in old-world or alien coins, guineas, moidores, dollars, and doubloons; while it was even said that on a time when a ship from the Indies was there wrecked, the silver sand of Lucky Bay (so called in consequence) had been mingled with sparkling gold-dust, and that the ivory teeth of elephants glistened upon the bare brown beach. The little churchyard, some four miles away, was three parts occupied with the bones thus cast on shore; most of them nameless and unknown, and buried in one mighty grave with a common headstone, *Sacred to the Memory of the Crew of this or that vessel, who perished in a Storm off Deadman's Reef*, and then the date. Nay, sometimes the very ship was nameless; her home-port and her destination alike unknown; and the part of the world she came from only guessed by her scattered and ownerless cargo. And yet, those who perished in her had relatives, and friends, and lovers, like the rest of us, and for long years were watched for, doubtless, and Heaven importuned for them—not altogether, let us hope, in vain.

But it is an ill wind that blows no one any good, and the coast-population thereabouts were by no means averse to a south-west gale, and what it brought them. 'Death is king, and *vivat* wrecks,' was their motto; and many a cottage in the neighbourhood of Lucky Bay was indebted for its most ambitious piece of furniture to the fury of the winds and waves. Such waifs were reckoned as the gifts of Providence, and accepted by the simple folk with genuine thankfulness, much as a good harvest might be acknowledged by the pious elsewhere. In old times, there had been ugly stories afloat of ships having been lured to their destruction by false lights, professing to be safety-beacons; but whether true or false, such matters belonged to the past only. Above the cliffs which looked down on the reef, there was

now a little light-house, which shot a fiery warning far out to sea; and this was served by a couple of men, who resided by turns with the coast-guard, there being only room for one lodger in this pocket Pharos. Thus, Lucky Bay was dedicated, as it were, to the protection of life as well as property, and seemed, at least to one of the three persons who were now looking down upon it, as the most desirable of human homes.

'How I wished that we lived here, dear Raymond, with those good kind Careys, watched night and day by trusty guardians, instead of in our lonely cottage, where, whenever you are absent, I feel so forlorn and unprotected. See, there is the lieutenant himself, and with a stranger too, as it seems; at least, I never saw him about the station before.'

'Perhaps he is some official visitor, or superintendent; Carey told me the other day that he was expecting some person of that kind. Look how he is pointing out to him the vegetable lions; I think I can hear him telling about those potatoes having been dibbled in by old Jacob, the lantern-keeper, with his own wooden leg; that's one of the old gentleman's stock stories. Ah, now he sees us. Look how he interrupts his talk, and breaks away from his visitor at once to come and bid you welcome; we may be sure, therefore, that he is not the inspector.'

Certainly, if such he was, Lieutenant Carey paid less respect than is usual in such cases to an official superior, striding away from him with rapid steps to meet the new-comers, and pouring forth a rain of welcomes as he came in a rich and powerful voice.

'This is charming of you, Mrs Hepburn; this is very friendly to walk so far to our poor home; and to bring your treasure with you too—my little godchild. Marion, Marion!' (here he raised his voice, as though contending with some fancied strife of the elements); 'come out, wife; here are the Hepburns.' Then, as he and his visitors approached one another, he went on in what he honestly considered to be confidential tones, but which could be heard in a favourable wind about half a mile.

'I am so delighted to see you, Hepburn; always delighted, of course, but particularly so to-day. Here's a strange lubber come to stay with me from the *Crown* of Westportown, recommended by the landlord—a man whom one respects, and to whom I am under obligations, but—just as though I kept a tavern like himself. "My friend, Mr Stevens," writes he, "is exceedingly anxious to see the coast near Lucky Bay, and especially the Mermaid Cavern, during these spring-tides; and there being no accommodation for himself nearer than this, and much more for his man (who remains here), I have ventured to ask you to give him a shake-down for a night or two." That's just what the fellow writes, and here is this Mr Stevens—a lubber, sir, a lubber—upon my hands. I have not an hour's time to spare, in expectation of this inspection. You must shew him the Mermaid Cavern, Hepburn; you must shew him the coast.'

A stout, florid, and notwithstanding his present trouble, a very cheerful-looking man, was Lieutenant Carey, though he had been pitted by the small-pox in a manner which he was wont himself to say, was no mere seaming. Though it was his way to be eloquent upon whatever annoyed him, he was by no means of a repining character,

otherwise finding himself a lieutenant still, after about forty years of sea-service, he might perhaps have considered his own case a hard one, and Lucky Bay rather a misnomer as his place of residence. But, on the contrary, not only did he make the very best of his position, but entertained the visionary idea that it would be improved some day; that to have a post in the coast-guard was not another name for being put on the shelf; and that a day would come when he would sniff the incense of official favour, and be rear-admiral of half the colours of the rainbow before he died. It was a happy faith, and must have been shared in those evil days of favouritism by many another gallant seaman, or surely the Lords of Admiralty would have all met their doom at the hands of naval Bellinghams; gray-headed mates must have hung themselves from the yard-arm; and shipless commanders taken to fresh water in despair from the top of Waterloo Bridge. It was Lieutenant Carey's belief, in spite of some adverse evidence, that the Admiralty kept a favourable eye upon him. It was true, indeed, that there had been no indecent haste in promoting their protégé, but what they had said to themselves was this: 'Whatever happens, we have John Carey in reserve; we know where to find him—we know where to lay our hand upon him; and by' (here they swore a little, as it was the fashion to do in those days, particularly when under the influence of friendly emotions)—'and by the Lord Harry, but some day we'll do it.' That day was still indefinite, and being so, why, it might be any day. Therefore, Lieutenant Carey held himself constantly in readiness for promotion, kept his preventive station in an absolutely flawless state of discipline and perfection; and could have exchanged it for the stern-cabin of any vessel suitable for a young Commander of four-and-fifty at a moment's notice, and with a good conscience. In the meantime, he indulged his imagination by putting much superior ships in commission than were likely to fall to his share at first, and in reading his own appointment thereto upon the quarter-deck to a crew that had flocked in hundreds to serve under his respected name. He had even concocted a little speech, very short and very pithy, to deliver under those precise circumstances; and pending their occurrence, had repeated it to Marion, his wife, about one hundred and forty times.

'Don't you think it will be the right sort of thing to say, Marion?' he would inquire; and after every repetition, Mrs Carey would gravely reply: 'It couldn't be better, John.' She took an immense interest in the alterations which he had determined to make in the cabin arrangements, which was the less to be wondered at since they had nothing but her own convenience and comfort in view; for in those days a sea-captain in his Majesty's service was permitted to have his wife on board with him; and had it not been so, good John Carey's dream would have been robbed of half its pleasure. Marion had been the only daughter of his friend and co-religionist—for Carey was a catholic, a circumstance which perhaps did not benefit his professional prospects in those days—Lieutenant Henry Linton, who was struck down by his side at the battle of Aboukir, by a spar from the French ship *L'Orient*, when that great vessel was blown to fragments with a thousand men in her, and with his last words he had com-

mended the friendless girl to Carey's protection. No bequest, drawn up and sealed with whatever formalities, could have been obeyed with more dutiful care; the idea of failing in such a sacred duty never entered into his thoughts; but the execution of it was not easy. Little Marion, at a girls' school at Hammersmith, had first to be written to by the bluff sailor, who was terribly put to it how to break such bad news by letter; then the scanty pension the child received from government had to be supplemented from the lieutenant's own purse, in order that her scholastic advantages should be still continued to her, and this necessitated a different system in his own expenditure, which for his means had been hitherto profuse, not to say prodigal. Then, when on shore, those interviews with Miss Backboard the schoolmistress—who nearly had a fit upon his happening, in the ordinary course of conversation, to mention the Lord Harry—were very trying; and more embarrassing yet did matters become, when Miss Marion, grown to womanhood, seemed to have a difficulty in calling him papa, which she had done for the last half-dozen years, and could not kiss his weather-beaten cheek as usual without a blush upon her own pretty face.

Then with a delicacy of expression such as my Lord Chesterfield could not have achieved, although he had sat up half the night racking his brain for courtly phrases, the lieutenant just appointed to Lucky Bay had offered his horny hand to the friendless girl, to have and to hold in marriage, if such an unequal match could really be contemplated by her with favour; though if not, the hand was hers still, so long as life was in it, dedicated to her service for her defence and succour always. But Marion Linton accepted her benefactor as her husband, and had never had any serious cause to regret that she had done so. No kinder heart ever beat beneath a blue jacket, nor were its noble simplicity and unselfishness lost upon her. Each, as they imagined, owed a great debt of gratitude to the other, and every day, strange as it sounds, that debt increased by mutual repayment. Without uxoriousness, which was foreign to his bluff and healthy nature, he was as devoted to her as he had promised to be if he had not become her husband; while she was anchored to him fast by that trustiest cable whose strands are Reverence and Esteem as well as Love. Lieutenant John Carey had, in short, fallen into luck's way at last, and, as it was his delight to boast, with small thanks to the Admiralty. Their favour had not been demonstrated, and was therefore yet to come; and how so likely to come as through their own official visitor, at present expected? This it was that made the good lieutenant so chary of his hospitality at this particular juncture, and so anxious to shift the burden of entertaining his strange guest upon Raymond's shoulders.

THE DONKEY DERBY.

DURING the mid-week of July last, there might have been remarked by the Observant a certain lack in the aspect of street-life among the poorer and more populous neighbourhoods of London. Belgrave Square was not affected by it, nor even Bayswater, but in the Edgeware and Tottenham Court Roads the hiatus could be easily detected, while in Whitechapel and Somers Town there was a void indeed. This was caused by the absence of the

more opulent class of costermongers, almost all of whom who kept carriages—and 'mokes' to draw them—had betaken themselves to the Agricultural Hall at Islington, where the Mule and Donkey Show was being held. This was open to all-comers; it was only necessary to be a donkey in order to become a candidate for one or other of the numerous prizes. If one was good in harness, then he might enter for the chariot races; if speedy on his legs, he might compete for the Donkey Derby (or, being of the feminine gender, for the Oaks); if 'quiet to drive and ride,' he might elect for either of these contests, or for both; nay, if utterly intractable, then he even might gain a prize by resolutely refusing to be ridden, and pitching his would-be Rareys over his ears.

The more humble his occupation, the better for his chances of reward, for the largest sums were set apart for those animals which were *bona fide* 'used by their owners as a means of gaining their livelihood.' The claims of birth were indeed respected, as should be, in the case of both mules and donkeys, the genealogy of some of which would be traced considerably further back than that of their human proprietors; there were not only the native-born animals, but the display was international; Spain sent her high-born mokes, and France her mercurial cuddies; and yet, upon the whole, good sense and utility were justly esteemed above good-breeding. There were distinct prizes given for the possession of Intelligence, for which the competitive ordeals (arranged, it was said, by gentlemen from the Educational Board, accustomed to conduct the ordinary A.S.A. examinations) seemed extremely searching and exhaustive. I am sorry to add that there were even rewards held out to 'performing' donkeys—in direct opposition to the recent Report of the Commission upon Public Schools. The system of education which they recommend (*passim*) is not that which fosters brilliant geniuses at the expense of the Commonplace. Moreover, to give a sovereign to a mule because he can 'fetch and carry,' is surely a misplaced benevolence; and the principle which dictates it, if pushed to extremity, would confer a medal upon an ass who could ascend a ladder, or take his part in ringing a peal of bells. However, with this exception, the prizes were as well apportioned as they were liberal, and—to write like an ass—if one did not actually obtain a prize, there was money given even to the Highly Commended and Commended donkeys, so that one could scarcely miss getting something; above all, nobody was inconvenienced by a Decoration, which of course must needs have been stuck on by a pin.

Without wishing to detract from the merit of this interesting exhibition, we would respectfully recommend that the catalogue should not in future be suffered to be tampered with by an exhibitor, for that a donkey—probably a 'performing' one—did have some share in its compilation, was but too evident. The mules we acquit of any malicious intention to deceive; but there is room for future improvement even in their part of the list. For instance, it was confusing to a child, and indeed to any person not a student of natural history, to read in capitals opposite to mule No. 1, *THE STAG*. 'Impossible!' was the expression which broke from many lips as they perused this statement, and compared it with the animal presented to their notice; and an application had generally to be made to

the Secretary before the inquiring mind could be soothed and satisfied. Of course, 'the Stag' was his public or 'racing' name; but what intensified the doubt about No. 1, was the very singular biography found appended to mule No. 5: 'Mr Edward Steer, No. 1 Ann Street, York Road, Battersea. *Polly*. Age 4 years. Bred by Mr George Baker, High St., Wandsworth. *Supposed to have been bred by a Stag—a thoroughbred mare. Price twenty guineas.*' Imagine the confusion excited in the spectator by these conflicting statements! The animal in question is said to be in some way connected with a Steer; then with Mr G. Baker; then with a Stag; but nevertheless to be a thoroughbred mare. Mr Baker, it is true, may himself be a Stag, although we do not say so, since, in railway matters, at least, such a term would be actionable. But even thus, the pedigree remains a riddle which it would need a Darwin to solve.

Among the foreign donkeys, if there had only been a prize for vocal attainments, the Spanish artists, named in the catalogue *Prima Donna* and *Don Pedro*, would unquestionably have distanced all competitors. Duet after duet was executed by these two performers in a manner to draw fingers to every ear; and as though acknowledging their leadership, no sooner did they commence their symphonies, than every donkey in the Agricultural Hall lifted up his voice in chorus: we had heard nothing like it—for volume—since the Handel Festival.

One of the most interesting of the animals exhibited was a little foal (amazingly like a calf) only a very few days old, whose mother, according to the voracious catalogue, rejoiced in the name of Benny, which we conclude to be the short for Benjamin. In Mokeland, however, it seems that names are conferred without reference to sex, for the donkey which bore the ambitious designation of *Gladiator* was also a female, and had been likewise blessed with infant progeny. In the next stall was *Blair Atholl*, but in his case the sex was in harmony with that of his distinguished prototype. There was also one donkey who had actually assumed the title of the heir-apparent to the British throne, and I regret to add that he was one of those who had wasted energies in learning to 'seek' missing articles, such as a dropped handkerchief, and to bring them back to their owners in his teeth—after the manner of a retriever. Of course, he might have done worse by 'bolting' (for he could not have otherwise appropriated it there) the property thus committed to his charge; but that is not the question. There was, moreover, a Princess Alexandra.

Some of the names of the competitors were quite poetical, such as *Jinny* (spelt, doubtless, for some sufficient reason, with an 'i'), *the Flower of the Flock*, *Daisy*, *Primrose*, and *Lady of the Lake*. Some of them, again, were peculiar, as *Peggy White Throat*, 'champion mare of Greenwich, Deptford, or Woolwich'; and *Old Tom of Oxford*, who (it was understood) had left his proxy, but certainly not his voice, with Mr Gathorne Hardy's committee.

The chariot-racing* in the arena was eminently classical: the drivers stood up in their two-wheeled vehicles, and urged their steeds by voice and gesture and the hustling of their reins. A friend of

* These chariots were the ordinary costermongers' barrows, as often as not without any seat at all.

ours discovered one of these gentlemen beating his donkey rather severely in the court without; and he apologised upon the ground that the Society* had prohibited sticks in the races, so that he was obliged to give it to *Tommy* in advance, 'else he would never move a hinch, bless yer.' But the charioteers spoke sticks and looked them, although they used none, and especially when they found themselves getting behind. We have it upon excellent authority that costermongers are kind to their donkeys, and therefore we believe it; but we must say that they possess a marvellous power of concealing—by facial expression—any doting affection which they may entertain for their four-footed favourites. The races were not well contested: it was always 'Eclipse first, and the rest nowhere.' In the Donkey Derby, the jockeys were attired in painted calico, and wore their owners' colours; but their seat was very different from that of our *Challoners* and *Fordhams*. They perched themselves on the extremity of their high-mettled steeds; and if they could furtively give a twist to the animal's tail, they thought themselves very fortunate; and it certainly had a marvellous effect in accelerating speed. A great number were pitched over their donkeys' ears, and there they hung frantically, endeavouring to wriggle back without the disgrace of having been thrown. The *genus* Moke is without doubt a difficult one to manage. Some would stop suddenly at full canter, without the least apparent cause, and shoot their riders like rubbish; while others would turn short round, and go the other way. Their idiosyncrasies, too, were most remarkable; some would not submit to any saddle, and a few even (literally) 'kicked against bridles'; while there was one whose peculiar fancy it was to wear a lady's saddle—not used by his rider at all, who sat behind it—and in that panoply distinguished himself very much.

Then, on the other hand, there were one or two of the jockeys—not the boys, we noticed, but in all cases grown men—who seemed to possess the mysterious secret of governing these quadrupeds, who, however restive or obstinate with others, became quiet and docile the instant they bestrode them. This was notably the case with Barney the Intractable, who was brought into the Arena, and exhibited as unconquerable by man. It did throw the dauntless rider, who essayed to mount it about six times; and though eventually it was forced to carry him round the course, it was not in a graceful attitude, but lying prone upon the creature's back, as though he had been Mazeppa, with his arms clasped around its neck; and yet that self-same mule acknowledged another 'coster' as his master without a bray of dissent, and as though he was as used to be overcome as the *Pons Asinorum*.

As to how the steam was got up—how the donkeys were induced to go—for they have no sort of rivalry, like the horse, and are evidently not intended by nature for trials of speed at all—that is indeed a problem. 'I tell yer 'ow it is,' observed one gentleman of philosophical aspect to whom, as a likely-looking person, we applied for information upon this point; 'if they mayn't punch, they may pinch, for who is to prevent 'em? and if they can only pull a little hair off, why, then, it's nice and tender; and that's what

we calls hestabishing a raw.' We are pleased to add, however, that this statement was discredited by other persons likely to be well informed, and may be attributed to Cynicism. Upon the whole, the animals looked sleek and well cared for; while their very obstinacy told in some degree in favour of their owners' forbearance; wherever it was exhibited, the contest was immediately given up as a bad job, and the discomfited rider generally concluded his distance—in token of the complete hopelessness of success—with his face to the tail.

Altogether, it was a very comical spectacle, and in our own case the day had a humorous conclusion, quite independent of mules and mokes. It being excessively wet, each omnibus from the *Angel* had its inside inconveniently full, and we amused ourselves by watching—ourselves under cover—the frantic struggles of those who had no umbrellas to obtain places. One gentleman, attired solely in black (even to the exclusion of linen), having obtained a seat next the door, proceeded to sell it by auction, and moved by the bid of tenpence, gave up his snug corner for that sum, and gravely stepped out into the rain. Having waited the usual interval of ten minutes for the next 'bus, he fought his way into that also, and then repeated his former little programme with the like success. I left him in the enjoyment of three and threepence thus ingeniously amassed; nor did I see any reason, so long as the rain continued, why he should not accumulate a fortune.

It seemed singular enough at first that so clever a gentleman should have reached middle life without being in a position to boast of a shirt-collar; but upon second thoughts we reflected that his case was precisely similar to that of the 'performing donkeys,' whom we had lately seen do everything but win a race; he might 'know a trick or two,' as the phrase goes, but still he was not the sort to get on in the world.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

AMID the stir and excitement of the election, came news of the discovery of another source of the Nile by the adventurous Mr Baker, whose name has been frequently mentioned of late among geographers. But this so-called source is a lake only, the *Lúta Nzige*, about two hundred and sixty miles long, and of proportionate breadth, which lies between the lake discovered by Captain Speke and the heretofore explored course of the Nile. The great river flows from one to the other, forming on the way the Karuma Waterfall, one hundred and twenty feet in height, in which particular it represents the Niagara Fall between Lakes Erie and Ontario. But it seems right to remark that the true source of the Nile has not yet been discovered, and that it must be looked for at the head of one of the streams which flow into the upper lake—the Victoria Nyanza of Speke. That the two lakes are reservoirs which keep the Nile always flowing, may be accepted as fact; but to describe them as sources is a misuse of terms. If Dr Livingstone, in his new exploration, should get into the hill-country above the Victoria Nyanza, we might hope to hear that the real source, the fountain-head of the Nile, had been discovered.

Chaucer said in his day that men got all their

* For the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, whose officers were stationed within the building.

new learning out of old books. It is worthy of remark, that these lakes of the Nile are laid down and described in old books on the geography of Africa. Ptolemy mentions them; and they are represented in some of the oldest Arabian and Portuguese maps. It is well known to scholars that the Emperor Nero sent two officers expressly to search for the head of the Nile. 'I myself,' writes Seneca, 'have heard the two centurions narrate that after they had accomplished a long journey, being furnished with assistance by the king of Ethiopia, and being recommended by him to the neighbouring kings, they penetrated into far-distant regions, and came to immense lakes, the termination of which neither the inhabitants knew, nor could any one hope to do so, because aquatic plants were so densely interwoven in the waters.' This description holds good to the present day; and it is thought that certain rocks seen by the centurions mark the site of the Karuma Falls.

Mr Baker proposes the name Albert Nyanza for his newly-discovered lake, and Murchison for the name of the great fall; but we think it would be best in each case to retain the native name, as more distinctive. He describes his voyage down the Luta Nzigé as 'extremely beautiful, the mountains frequently rising abruptly from the water, while numerous cataracts rush down their furrowed sides. . . . The water is deep, sweet, and transparent,' and, except at the outlet of the river, the shores are free from reeds. 'Mallegha, on the west coast of the lake, is a large and powerful country, governed by a king named Kajoro, who possesses boats sufficiently large to cross the lake.' A considerable trade exists, the natives exchanging ivory and beautifully-prepared skins and mantles for salt, brass ornaments, and beads. Mr Baker spent thirteen days in navigating the lake, and explored the channel of the Nile, during which the great falls were discovered. 'About ten miles from the junction,' he writes, 'the channel contracted to about two hundred and fifty yards in width, with little perceptible stream, very deep, and banked as usual with high reeds, the country on either side undulating and wooded. At about twenty miles from Magungo, my voyage suddenly terminated; a stupendous water-fall, of about one hundred and twenty feet perpendicular height, stopped all further progress. Above the great fall, the river is suddenly confined between rocky hills, and it races through a gap, contracted from a grand stream of perhaps two hundred yards width to a channel not exceeding fifty yards. Through this gap it rushes with amazing rapidity, and plunges at one leap into a deep basin below.' It may interest some readers to know that Nyanza means *Great Water*, and Luta Nzigé, *Dead Locust*.

As some travellers know, the Americans have carried a railway over the Alleghanies, and the Austrians another over the heights of Sömmering; but the railway proposed for travellers journeying from France into Italy by the pass of Mont Cenis, is a work still more remarkable, for it will be a railway laid on a common road, taking the gradients as they exist, whether difficult or not, and the height at the summit is nearly six thousand feet above the sea. As is generally known, the Italian engineers are driving a tunnel through Mont Cenis, which, when finished, will be more than seven miles long; but as the finish is not expected before 1873, and as the time occupied in travelling the forty-seven miles by diligence between St Michel

on the French side, to Susa on the Italian side, is too long for these days of rapid communication, Mr Fell, an English engineer, has proposed to lay a railway across the mountain between the two places, and has completed a couple of miles on the most difficult part near the summit, by way of experiment. A railway in such a region must, of course, be adapted to the special circumstances; the gauge is not quite three feet eight inches, and between the two principal rails is laid a third rail, at a height of about seven inches, which is gripped by horizontal wheels working beneath the locomotive. Hence it will be understood, that while the ordinary wheels work on the two principal rails, the horizontal wheels, by their pressure against the middle rail, enable the engine to overcome the steepness of the ascent, and at the same time hold the train so securely in its place, that running off the rails is next to an impossibility. The middle rail may, indeed, be described as a safety-rail, for by its means the line can be carried up and down very steep slopes, and round sharp curves. Captain Tyler, the government inspector, who went out to Mont Cenis to witness the experiments, reports favourably of them; and he shews that, judging from the traffic of the past few years, the over-summit railway may be paid for, and a handsome profit realised, by the time that the railway through the tunnel shall be completed; and he shews further, that by bringing our Indian mail to the Italian port of Brindisi (instead of Marseille), and across Mont Cenis, it will arrive thirty-eight hours sooner than at present. This latter is in itself so important a consideration, that it should settle the question as to adoption of the mountain route. The cost of the line is estimated at L.6720 a mile; the time required to travel from St Michel to Susa will be four hours and a half. When accomplished, this undertaking will probably become a model for other railways in mountainous countries.

Mention has been made of a French invention, by which, as is said, a train while in motion lays the dust along the line. We have no particulars of the method by which this very desirable result is accomplished, but we shall watch for them with some curiosity.

Students of what has come to be called the science of language, though they attach importance to the spelling of words, have been compelled to attach more importance to sounds; for the sound of a word or syllable is often a better clue in tracing it from language to language than the spelling. But as languages do not agree in the signs by which they represent sounds, students have always had more or less of difficulty in their researches, and attempts have been made to construct a universal language as a means of overcoming it. The most recent attempt to express all sounds by a system of signs is that just made public by the inventor, Mr Alexander Melville Bell, and it appears to be the most effectual and comprehensive. His alphabet, if such it may be called, comprises thirty-nine fundamental symbols, and with these he expresses all vocal sounds, whatever the language in which they are uttered. As an extreme example, he will spell a sneeze. The system has been put to the test in the following way: Mr Bell invites his visitors to make words, or combine any kind of sounds in any language, and after pronouncing these himself till he has got them correctly, he writes them down. Having collected a sufficient number of examples, he calls

his two sons into the room, and they, being acquainted with the above-mentioned thirty-nine symbols, immediately pronounce all the words or sounds, however complex or uncouth they may be.

It is obvious that such a system as this admits of wide application. It is a promising initiation of a universal language; and, as has been well said, 'to communicate through the telegraph by pure sounds, independently of meaning, so that Arabic or Chinese may travel from a clerk who knows not a word to another just as unlearned as himself—to teach the dumb how to speak by instructing them in the actual use of their organs—to take down the sounds of foreign languages, especially those of savages, and to transmit them home—to learn how to pronounce a foreign language by interlinear use of the alphabet of sounds—will be a very pretty instalment.'

Mr Bell is so fully convinced of the utility of his invention, that he has memorialised the government to defray the cost of casting his types, and of instructing a sufficient number of persons to propagate his system. We trust he may be successful, for it seems to us that aid to such an undertaking would be a praiseworthy application of the public money. The educational department at South Kensington might perhaps assist in promoting it.

Among the consequences of the great increase of population and trade throughout the country, one of the most important is the water-supply. Every year, more and more water is required for drinking, domestic purposes, and manufactures; but the supply is not unlimited, and is moreover curtailed by the increasing pollution of brooks and rivers. Hence some persons, looking to the future, foresee the time when Great Britain will suffer from want of water. Under these circumstances, it is reassuring to be told that we have an underground supply from which we may draw as much as we are likely to want, and which has been already tapped with excellent effect. This supply is in the New Red Sandstone, a formation which prevails mostly in our north-western and midland counties, where population is most crowded, having a thickness of more than one thousand feet in Lancashire, which thins off to one hundred and fifty feet in Nottinghamshire and Warwickshire. Its extent in length and breadth is more than one thousand square miles; and into this as a vast reservoir the rainfall sinks and accumulates in such quantity, that it would supply twenty gallons a head every day to ten million people. Such is the statement put forth by Mr Edward Hull of the Geological Survey, and it may be regarded as exceedingly good news.

There are seven public wells in Liverpool sunk into the New Red, which yield five million gallons every twenty-four hours. At Pendleton, a single well will yield the same quantity if the pumps are kept going. The other wells of Manchester supply about six million gallons. At Birkenhead, Leek, Nottingham, Birmingham, anywhere, in fact, within the area of the New Red, the supply is alike copious and continuous, and, remarkably enough, is most abundant in the summer months. In addition to its abundance, the water is of good quality, which is an important element in the question. It is pleasant and sparkling, not so soft as the water of Loch Katrine, but not so hard as that derived from the chalk, and is found suitable in brewing, bleaching, and dyeing. It contains

but little organic matter, in which particular it is much more suitable for drinking than the water-supply of London. That water is best suited to health in which the mineral substances prevail over the organic. 'In truth,' says Mr Hull, 'the New Red is a wonderful natural filter. Receiving as it does on its surface water from various sources, and charged with impurities of various kinds, it imbibes a portion, allows it to percolate downwards in a slow and gradual descent, every instant extracting some noxious particle, till the liquid is freed from every substance injurious to human life, and is returned to us limpid as the waters of a brook which gurgles along the rugged bed of a Highland glen.' We may have two hundred million gallons of such water every day for the mere trouble of boring down into the rock!

WERE I A STAR.

WERE I a bright and glittering star,
Set in the firmament above,
I'd pierce the densest clouds there are,
And watching o'er thee from afar,
I'd prove thy beacon-light of love.
A Star of Hope so dazzling bright
To lead thee through life's troublous sea;
Onwards I'd point thee to thy flight,
Upwards I'd lure thee by my light—
I'd prove a guiding-star to thee.

WERE I a bird, on fluttering wing,
For thee I'd tune my matin lay;
For thee my sweetest notes I'd sing;
For thee I'd make the echoes ring
Through all the glad some summer day;
And in the dewy eventide,
When other birds had sought their nest,
Still nearer thee would I abide,
And warbling softly by thy side,
I'd gently lull thee to thy rest.

WERE I yon lovely fragile flower,
So delicate and fair to see,
Contented in my woody bower,
I'd linger out my little hour,
So thou didst cast one glance on me;
Or gathered from my lowly bed,
For thee I'd put fresh beauty on,
For thee I'd raise my drooping head,
For thee my richest fragrance shed,
Then fade and die when thou wert gone.

BUT golden stars, however bright,
Will pale and vanish in the day;
The skylark's song will cease at night;
And lilies wither in the light,
Whilst I would ever near thee stay.
So truer than the flickering star,
More lasting than the fragile flower,
More constant than the warblers are,
I'd ever watch thee, near or far,
And love and serve thee hour by hour.